

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend claim 28 and add new claims 35-40 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. - 20. (canceled).

21. (previously presented) In combination:

an optical connector plug comprised of a plug housing for supporting a ferrule fixed to an end of an optical fiber and a connecting member connected to an exterior surface of the plug housing, the optical connector plug having a first axis extending along the exterior surface thereof in a longitudinal direction of the connecting member;

an end face polishing machine comprised of a polishing member having a polishing surface for undergoing rotational movement in a first direction of rotation to polish an end face of the ferrule and an end face of the optical fiber during a polishing operation; and

a jig plate comprised of a jig plate body, a mounting part connected to the jig plate body for mounting the jig plate on the end face polishing machine, a holding part formed in a surface of the jig plate body, and a holding member for removably supporting the optical connector plug in the holding part so that the end face of the ferrule and the

end face of the optical fiber confront the polishing surface of the polishing member when the jig plate is mounted on the end face polishing machine, the holding member having an engaging portion for detachable engagement with the connecting member of the optical connector plug to removably support the optical connector plug so that during a polishing operation, the ferrule rotates in a second direction of rotation opposite to the first direction of rotation while the end face of the ferrule and the end face of the optical fiber contact the polishing surface of the polishing member at a preselected angle of inclination and while an axis extending in the direction of inclination of the end face of the ferrule and the end face of the optical fiber coincides with a second axis of the optical connector plug disposed generally orthogonal to the first axis.

22. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 21; wherein the second axis of the optical connector plug extends along an exterior surface of the optical connector plug different from the exterior surface thereof to which the connecting member is connected.

23. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 21; wherein the connecting member comprises a latch; and wherein the holding member has a holding hole having the

engaging portion for detachable engagement with the latch to removably support the optical connector plug.

24. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 23; wherein the holding member is removably mounted in the holding part.

25. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 21; wherein the connecting member comprises a projection projecting from the exterior surface of the plug housing; and wherein the jig plate body has a groove for detachably receiving the projection to removably support the optical connector plug.

26. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 25; wherein the holding part is formed in a first portion of the jig plate body; and wherein the holding member is mounted on a second portion of the jig plate body different from the first portion thereof.

27. (previously presented) A combination according to claim 26; wherein the holding member has an arm portion extending in a direction toward the holding part for removably supporting the optical connector plug in the holding part.

28. (currently amended) A jig plate for use with an end face polishing machine having a polishing member for undergoing rotation in a first direction of rotation to polish

end faces of an optical fiber and a ferrule fixed to an end of the ferrule optical fiber of an optical connector plug during a polishing operation, the jig plate comprising:

a body;

a mounting part connected to the body for mounting the jig plate to the end face polishing machine;

a holding part disposed in a surface of the body;

and

a holding member for removably supporting the optical connector plug in the holding part so that the end faces of the ferrule and optical fiber confront a polishing surface of the polishing member when the jig plate is mounted on the end face polishing machine, the holding member having an engaging portion for detachable engagement with a connecting member of the optical connector plug to removably support the optical connector plug so that during a polishing operation, the end faces of the ferrule and optical fiber rotate in a second direction of rotation opposite to the first direction of rotation while contacting a polishing surface of the polishing member at a preselected angle of inclination and while an axis extending in the direction of inclination of the end faces of the ferrule and optical fiber coincides with a first axis of the optical connector plug disposed generally orthogonal to a second axis of the optical connector plug

extending along an exterior surface thereof on which the connecting member is disposed and extending in a longitudinal direction of the connecting member.

29. (previously presented) A jig plate according to claim 28; wherein the connecting member of the optical connector plug comprises a latch; and wherein the holding member has a holding hole having the engaging portion for detachable engagement with the latch to removably support the optical connector plug.

30. (previously presented) A jig plate according to claim 29; wherein the holding member is removably mounted in the holding part.

31. (previously presented) A jig plate according to claim 28; wherein the connecting member of the optical connector plug comprises a projection projecting from the exterior surface of the optical connector plug; and wherein the body has a groove for detachably receiving the projection to removably support the optical connector plug.

32. (previously presented) A jig plate according to claim 31; wherein the holding part is formed in a first portion of the body; and wherein the holding member is mounted on a second portion of the body different from the first portion thereof.

33. (previously presented) A jig plate according to claim 32; wherein the holding member has an arm portion extending in a direction toward the holding part for removably supporting the optical connector plug in the holding part.

34. (previously presented) An end face polishing method, comprising the steps of:

providing an optical connector plug having a ferrule fixed to an end of an optical fiber, an exterior surface, a connecting member connected to the exterior surface, and a first axis extending along the exterior surface thereof in a longitudinal direction of the connecting member;

providing a polishing member mounted for undergoing rotational movement in a first direction of rotation;

providing a jig plate comprised of a body and a holding part formed in a surface of the body;

removably mounting the optical connector plug in the holding part of the jig plate so that the ferrule extends at a preselected angle of inclination relative to the surface of the body and so that an axis extending in the direction of inclination of end faces of the optical fiber and ferrule coincides with a second axis of the optical connector plug disposed generally orthogonal to the first axis;

moving the jig plate to bring the end faces of the optical fiber and ferrule into pressure contact with a polishing surface of the polishing member; and

rotating the polishing member to polish the end faces of the optical fiber and ferrule while the end faces of the optical fiber and ferrule rotate in a second direction of rotation opposite to the first direction of rotation and while the axis extending in the direction of inclination of the end faces of the optical fiber and ferrule coincides with the second axis of the optical connector plug.

35. (new) A combination according to claim 21; further comprising mounting means for mounting the holding member in the holding part of the jig plate so that during a polishing operation, the holding member supports the optical connector plug in the holding part so that a longitudinal axis of the ferrule fixed to the end of the optical fiber is disposed at an obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member.

36. (new) A combination according to claim 35; wherein the mounting means comprises a holding hole of the holding part for receiving the holding member so that a longitudinal axis of the holding member is disposed at the obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member during a polishing operation.

37. (new) A jig plate according to claim 28; further comprising mounting means for mounting the holding member in the holding part so that during a polishing operation, the holding member supports the optical connector plug in the holding part so that a longitudinal axis of the ferrule fixed to the end of the optical fiber is disposed at an obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member.

38. (new) A jig plate according to claim 37; wherein the mounting means comprises a holding hole of the holding part for receiving the holding member so that a longitudinal axis of the holding member is disposed at the obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member during a polishing operation.

39. (new) A method according to claim 34; wherein the mounting step includes the step of mounting the optical connector plug in the holding part so that a longitudinal axis of the ferrule fixed to the end of the optical fiber is disposed at an obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member during polishing of the end faces of the optical fiber and the ferrule.

40. (new) A method according to claim 39; wherein the mounting step includes the step of mounting the optical connector plug to a tubular portion of the holding part having a longitudinal axis disposed at the obtuse angle relative to the polishing surface of the polishing member during polishing of the end faces of the optical fiber and the ferrule.